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ABSTRACT

The national language of Indonesia is Bahasa Indonesia, although there are hundreds of languages and dialects spoken by different ethnic groups. In 1977, more than 26 million Indonesians were illiterate in their national language. Present efforts to eradicate illiteracy include construction of 10,000-15,000 primary schools annually since 1973 and the promotion of nonformal educational programs. Indonesia is now committed to the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization-coordinated Asia-Pacific Programme of Education for All (APPEAL) involving universalization of primary education, eradication of illiteracy, and continuing education. Planning for literacy involves the central, provincial, district/municipality, and subdistrict levels. Curriculum development strives for a balance between the areas of specific local needs and areas of national core content derived from national goals and common problems. Basic education includes functional knowledge that can be used to raise the standard of living; certain skills that may be used as capital to earn a living; and mental attitudes toward innovation and development that are crucial to social change and economic growth. The "Kejar" approach to illiteracy eradication is that nonformal learning groups be formed in order to catch up the spheres of life in which they are behind, including the social, economic, and political spheres. The learning materials called Package A are equal to a plus-minus primary school curriculum. Package B materials will cover junior high school curriculum, including materials on skills relevant to earning a living. Managers, literacy volunteers, and learning centers are involved in Indonesia's efforts to eradicate illiteracy. (CML)

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LITERACY LESSONS

CE 055 146

INTERNATIONAL LITERACY YEAR

Literacy in Indonesia: a key to modern life

by Washington P. Napitupulu

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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INTERNATIONAL BUREAU OF EDUCATION

INDONESIA: UNITY IN DIVERSITY AND PROGRESS THROUGH EDUCATION

In Indonesia hundreds of languages and dialects are spoken by different ethnic groups, but mercifully there is one national language, *Bahasa Indonesia*, hence the motto of the Republic, Bhinneka Tunggal Ika (Unity in Diversity). The pledge to be one state, one nation and one national language, i.e. Indonesia, was expressed by Indonesian youth seventeen years before we proclaimed our independence in 1945. We are so diverse, and yet united by the common goals of building a prosperous Indonesia with social justice for all.

As far as national ideology is concerned, Indonesia is proud to have its own: *Pancasila*, the five cardinal values to be lived by and to guide the behaviour of all Indonesians:

(1) Belief in one supreme god; (2) Just civilized humanity; (3) The unity of Indonesia, (4) Democracy led by the wisdom of deliberations among representatives; (5) Social justice for all people of Indonesia. These cardinal values have been translated into thirty-six sub-values, and we are still in the process of retranslating each of them closer to action in different spheres of life in order to strengthen the Pancasila ideal of state and nationhood.

The Republic of Indonesia proclaimed its independence on August 17, 1945; the Preamble of the 1945 Constitution clearly states that one of the national goals is to educate the nation in order that our human resources are capable of solving personal, community and national problems, and able to participate fully and positively in nation-building.

Colonized by the Dutch for approximately 350 years, and by Japan for about 3½ years, the Indonesians had not had ample opportunities for education. Thus

when we proclaimed our independence thirty-four years ago, 95% of the 70 million Indonesians at that time were illiterate in Latin characters. Soon after, the Government, together with the people, worked very hard to eradicate illiteracy, but were not very successful, due to insufficient funds and inadequate learning materials, especially for post-literacy programmes, and due to the misconception of literacy as the mere recognition of the alphabet and numbers. This was why most of those who participated actively in literacy programmes during 1945-1977 later lapsed into illiteracy, and why we still had more than 26 million illiterate people in 1977, the year in which a new approach was implemented.

Prior to the school-building programme begun in 1973, moreover, our ability to provide education could not cope with the rapid population growth.

While science and technology now have successfully opened new vistas and solved some mysteries of life, there are still groups of people who are not able to appreciate the progress of modern life simply because of their illiteracy. Modern life deals increasingly with environments through alphabets and numbers: various guides, signs, symbols and other messages are expressed in the form of writing, as are sources of knowledge and information circulating in society. In short, an illiterate will certainly feel aware of his under-development and therefore his inability to share in the benefits and progress of modern life.

Fuad Hassan, Minister of Education and Culture on the occasion of the 22nd International Literacy Day (1987).

THE POLITICAL WILL

The political will can take one of two points of view. The first is, 'Let the people be ignorant (uneducated, illiterate) in order for us to rule them easily!' This axiom, combined with the policy of 'divide and conquer', had been practised for centuries by the exploiters, the colonial powers, but it finally failed. Independence proclamations in each of the countries of Asia and Africa have advocated replacement of this axiom with the second, i.e. 'Let us educate the people so that they become well-informed, responsible and productive citizens!' Participation in national development may be expected and the democratization process be promoted only when a two-way communication with the people exists. Moreover, ignorance is a main source of poverty, and the main purpose of proclaiming independence is not only political, but also socio-economic.

Based on the statements above, it may be assumed that there is no room at all for the first axiom to exist in the Afro-Asian regions, or in any other region of our world. If that is the case, why are there millions of uneducated Afro-Asians? We will not deal with the reasons for this, but suffice it to say that because 'the stomach cannot wait', and due to the scarcity of resources, the priorities of development plans and programmes sometimes omit a thorough examination and implementation of the second axiom. Nevertheless, if the gap betwen the haves and the have-nots is essentially educational, then educational programmes, both formal and non-formal, and in particular literacy, must have first priority.

In Indonesia, the purpose of education is to develop the 'complete man' and the 'whole Indonesian society'. This means that the government is committed to uni-

versal education, and to remedy the inequalities in educational opportunity. The present effort in building thousands of primary schools (10,000 to 15,000 annually since 1973!) and the boosting of non-formal educational programmes, including literacy, must be seen in that light.

> *The promotion of literacy is inseparably linked to the pursuit of peace and progress. Tensions and strife – either within nations or between them – distract attention and divert resources from constructive to destructive purposes. Similarly, conditions of economic stability channel investments into emergency needs of areas with quick pay-offs and away from longer-term social investments, such as education, upon which the future of developing nations ultimately depends. International Literacy Year should invite statesmen and the public at large to reflect upon these issues. Above all, it should serve the cause of peace and progress by providing an example of fruitful cooperation among all nations and peoples in pursuit of a common cause: the quest for a literate world.*
>
> The Statement of Ulan Bator. *Report of the international symposium for the Preparation of International Literacy Year.* Ulan Bator, Mongolia, 24-28 May 1987.

THE PRESENT SITUATION

Indonesia is now committed to a Unesco-coordinated Asia-Pacific Programme of Education for All (APPEAL), involving (1) universalization of primary education, (2) eradication of illiteracy, and (3) continuing education.

Prior to the school-building programme begun in 1973, many primary school-aged children could not enter schools and became illiterate. Moreover, parents who have never gone to school and whose economy is minimal, either did not send their children to schools (no motivation) or let them leave school early (drop-outs) in order to supplement family income. Those

children who dropped out of primary schools early very soon became illiterate. Thus, the high drop-out rate at the primary level was aggravating the problem of illiteracy.

It was the unattained goal that by the end of 1984 every child between the ages of 7 and 12 would obtain a primary education certificate; however, by the end of 1978 it was calculated that only 85% of children aged 7 to 12 were attending schools, leaving the remaining 15% and drop-outs as potential illiterates.

From 1977 until 1984 the targets for literacy programmes were those between 10 and 45 years of age, but since announcement in 1984 of the movement for compulsory education, the target groups have been extended to those between 7 and 44 years old. We intend, however, to start mobilizing those 45 years and older to join the literacy programme in 1990, the International Literacy Year.

The population census of 1980 revealed that over 17 million people aged 7 to 44 years were illiterate; in the survey made by the Central Bureau of Statistics in 1985, only 13 million persons were illiterate. Thus the literacy programme implemented in the last five years has successfully helped the people attain literacy.

PLANNING FOR LITERACY

The planning for literacy implies the need for a cross-sector approach, and the 'mobilization' of educated manpower to provide a helping hand. The planning for literacy in Indonesia invites the involvement of many agencies, as follows:

1. *At the central level*: The National Planning Board coordinates all plans, including the literacy pro-

gramme, and ensures that the literacy programme is linked with other development programmes. The Ministry of Education and Culture, in this case the National Coordinating Committee for Non-Formal Education, draws up the programme for literacy in particular and non-formal education in general, and integrates the literacy programme with the total educational plan and overall socio-economic and cultural development. The Ministry of Finance allocates funds for each programme and project, including the literacy programme, and its follow-up.

2. *At the provincial level*: The Provincial Planning Board coordinates and synchronizes all provincial plans, including the literacy programme. The Provincial Office of the Ministry of Education and Culture, together with the Provincial Village Development Coordinating Team, draws up the overall education plan based on the preliminary plans received from the district/municipality branch offices, including the literacy programme and its follow-up.

3. *At the district/municipality level*: The district/municipality planning board coordinates and synchronizes all plans, including the literacy programmes proposed by the district/municipality office of education and culture and the district/municipality village development coordinating team, before submitting them to the province.

4. *At the sub-district level*: Under the leadership of the Camat (head of the sub-district) the community education supervisor gathers educational data from the villages, including data on illiterates and primary school drop-outs, draws up action programmes to help these people, and submits them to the district/municipality office of education and culture.

LEARNING NEEDS AND CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

It has often been argued that learning processes must suit learning needs. No one objects to this general statement. One does feel uneasy, however, on going further to say that the learning materials must suit the specific local needs of the illiterates. Are the needs of the learners confined only to the specific community in which they live? Are their needs really so specific that they do not resemble those of other human communities? One might go even further by saying, are they quite a different breed of human beings than those in other communities? Very heated dicussion can arise over this point: local versus national, particular versus general or universal; but reality repeatedly tells us that it is not a question of 'either – or' but a 'continuum'. Therefore, in developing a curriculum, especially the contents of learning materials, there must be a balance between the areas of specific local needs and areas of national core content derived from national goals and common problems.

We may then ask what kind of curriculum, or rather curricula, should be developed for the training of central and provincial officers to implement the approach of 'development from below'? The district/municipality and sub-district officers, the supervisors and their assistants, the monitors, the tutors and the learners, each group needs a curriculum suited to its task. The officers are trained primarily in the organization and management of the literacy programme. They also receive training in the concepts, definitions and strategies of non-formal education, including illiteracy eradication programmes. Finally, each official is trained in motivational techniques.

Learning from the past weaknesses of the literacy programme, the Ministry of Education and Culture in 1977 proposed a new approach to illiteracy eradication called 'the Kejar strategy', involving a chain-reaction system of geometric progression. In sum, the Kejar strategy implies that learning groups be formed by the learners in order to catch up in retarded spheres of life – social, economic and political.

Non-formal educational programmes in Indonesia are directed towards creating a new atmosphere which makes it possible for every educated person to be called upon as a volunteer to help fellow human beings with less or no education, both in the new illiteracy eradication programme as well as in other non-formal educational programmes. We now propose that each educated person helps ten persons, and each one in turn helps ten more, and so on.

> *. . . a new effort to fight illiteracy in a new style must be carried out. These new efforts are not only intended to abolish illiteracy in Latin characters and Arabic numerals, but also to abolish ignorance of the Indonesian national language, and to raise the level of basic education.*
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> General Soeharto, President of the Republic of Indonesia, State Address before Parliament on 16 August 1978.

Basic education involved in the campaign to promote Bahasa Indonesia here means firstly, imparting functional knowledge or information that can be used to raise the standard of living; secondly, imparting certain skills which may be used as capital to earn a living; and thirdly, inculcating, nurturing and developing mental attitudes toward innovation and development crucial to social change and economic growth.

The ideas in Package A learning materials arose from an awareness of the low standard of education in Indonesia, and from the thoughts of Philip Coombs et al. concerning the minimum essential learning needs: 'To size up the educational requirements of children and youth in any rural area and to plan provisions for meeting them, one must first have a clear and realistic conception of their minimum essential learning needs. Hence the starting question is: What educational needs should be fulfilled by one means or another for all boys and girls before they assume the full responsibilities of adulthood? Without a clear and detailed answer to this question, the assertion that every child has a right to an education has little practical meaning'.

In order to effectively execute the new style illiteracy eradication programme, learning materials known as Package A have been developed. Package A is a collection of minimum learning materials covering all spheres of life, which should be mastered by every illiterate and primary school drop-out in order that they become well-informed, responsible and productive Indonesian citizens. Package A will assist the learners to become a complete (whole) Indonesian with Pancasila morals, because it covers areas including religious and spiritual teachings based on the belief in God Almighty, family and community life, rights and obligations of a citizen, environmental awareness, family welfare education, career orientation, literacy (reading, writing, arithmetic in the Indonesian national language), and community health.

Package A is in the form of books, posters, pamphlets, cassette recordings, slides and films that contain educational skills and mental attitudes toward innovation and development.

(a) Series A–1 through A–20 consists of integrated lessons in basic reading, writing, arithmetic and the Indonesian national language. The contents of the previous number become the basis of the next number.

(b) Series A–21 through A–60 is composed of more advanced reading, and contains additional basic knowledge and skills concerning various aspects of life. Series A–21 through A–60 reinforce dicussions in the previous books. The level of difficulty of all these is similar, thus not dependent on the preceding, as in A–1 to A–20.

(c) Series A–61 through A–100 is the second selection of advanced readings. They discuss the wider and more specific aspects of various areas of life. This series is more advanced than the previous ones.

Since 1984 when President Soehartc announced implementation of the Compulsory Education Movement for 7 to 12 year old children, the Package A Kejar Programme joined the movement as an alternative to schooling. Therefore, compulsory education in Indonesia has been approached not only through formal education but also simultaneously through non-formal education.

The Package A Kejar Programme is an integrated programme for pre-literacy, literacy and post-literacy, therefore it eliminates the question of lapsing, or relapsing, into illiteracy. Another very significant characteristic of Package A is that reading, writing and arithmetic have been integrated in order to make it more meaningful to the learners.

The Package A booklets were designed such that an illiterate or a primary school drop-out is motivated to learn. The contents of Package A may be said to be equal to a plus-minus primary school curriculum. It is plus because it is designed to be more relevant to daily life, and it is minus because those things which are more mnemo-technical in nature in the primary school

curriculum were deleted. The Package A contents were developed following a concentric principle, i.e., man as the centre moves slowly into the wider environment. This means also that the books have been designed to set forth principles from the more concrete to the more abstract.

Since the Package A Kejar Programme purports to eliminate three blind areas simultaneously – blindness in Latin characters and numerals, in Bahasa Indonesia, and in basic education – the learning Package A booklets are written in Bahasa Indonesia but the medium of instruction used by the tutors is the mother tongue (or dialect) of each region. Packages A–1 through A–3 introduce the alphabet and numbers (together) while simultaneously teaching the Bahasa Indonesia. The tutors are instructed to proceed very slowly with A–1 to A–20, especially when dealing with learners who have never gone to school. The tutor must encourage learners to practice what they have learned in real-life situations, such as planting vegetables around the house, etc.

The remaining booklets are written for self-instructional purposes, therefore the learners may need a tutor only once or twice a week. Mastering booklets A–1 to A–20 means a learner has mastered more than 1,500 basic Indonesian words commonly used in daily activities. After mastering these 1,500 words, a learner can communicate in Bahasa Indonesia and can study A–21 through A–100 by himself or herself.

The educational levels of tutors differ, ranging from fifth or sixth grade drop-outs to university graduates. Therefore two guidebooks for teaching package A have been prepared: one for tutors teaching A–1 through A–10 and one for those teaching A–11 through A–20. A guidebook for tutors teaching A–21 through A–100 is not needed since each book is self-instructional.

The new law on the National Education System, effective as of March 27, 1989, states clearly that there are two streams or channels of education, i.e. formal or school education, and non-formal or out-of-school education. The same law introduced a nine-year basic education programme that every citizen should pursue, in particular the young people ages 6 to 15. The present five-year development plan will launch new efforts in the direction of compulsory education, so that full compulsory education for young people 7 to 15 of age may be implemented in the sixth five-year plan. Since the new law on basic education will be implemented through both formal education (primary and junior high schools) and non-formal education (learning packages A and B), then we must very soon provide package B learning materials.

Package B will consist of two series, (1) *B–general*, probably less than twenty books containing basic knowledge or information equivalent to knowledge provided for junior high school students, and (2) *B–skills*, probably more than thirty books on various relevant skills needed for earning a living. The Package B learner may choose one skill that he or she would like to pursue to earn a living.

While more than 150 million books of Package A are now being studied by learning groups, Package B is still under preparation, and hopefully next year we will start implementing it. The Kejar principle will also be used in the Package B Kejar Programme. The learning materials, particularly the B–skills, will be written in a self-instructional form so that workers who are learners may be easily motivated.

The target groups for the Package B Kejar Programme will be first, the learners who have finished

studying Package A; second, primary school graduates who have not continued to junior high school; and third, junior high school drop-outs.

When the Package B Kejar Programme is under way, the non-formal education wing of the Ministry of Education and Culture may design and devise a Package C Kejar Programme for those who have finished studying Package B, those who graduate from junior high school and do not continue to secondary schools, and those who drop out from secondary schools. And perhaps in the future there will also be a Package D Kejar Programme . . .?

THE TRAINING OF MANAGERS AND ORGANIZERS

It is believed that without a manager, an organizer, a stimulator, a motivator, or a challenger, the goal of 'each one teach ten' would not be reached. The formation of learning groups in the villages (there are more than 66,000 villages in Indonesia!) will occur only if the learners perceive the literacy programme as a way of modernizing and humanizing their lives and their work.

In order that both top-down and bottom-up approaches may be realized in the implementation of the literacy programme, the training of managers and organizers at all levels must be adequately planned and carried out. This has been in operation since 1975: the central and provincial; the district and municipal non-formal education officers; the sub-district non-formal education supervisors – the front-line staff; and the tutors and monitors in the villages.

The non-formal education supervisors are told that if the learning groups are not organized and managed in

the villages, the programme of upgrading the officers is really a great failure and a waste, because the haves (they) get something and the have-nots (the villagers) get nothing. During the training of specific groups all the participants are constantly reminded that they must spread their knowledge after a course is over in order that the course be economically sound, and also to bridge the gap between the haves and the have-nots.

As part and parcel of the village institute, we have encouraged the formation of Non-Formal Education (NFE) Task Forces in the villages.

RECRUITING VOLUNTEERS FOR LITERACY

Indonesia may be seen as a country of volunteers. Not only during the struggle for independence against the colonizers but even today, without the help provided by volunteers, progress toward modern life in Indonesia would be unthinkable. Almost everyone is a volunteer, either part-time or full-time, short-term or long-term. This voluntary spirit is consistent with our mutual assistance system.

LEARNING CENTRES

There are more than 200 learning centres (called Sanggar Kegiatan Belajar-SKB) in Indonesia with the following functions: first, to train the monitors and tutors of learning groups, and secondly, to produce learning materials more relevant to the areas being served, both for the learners, the monitors and tutors. In the future

hopefully each sub-district will have one SKB with adequate staff to meet the needs of the learners in the villages. There will then be about 3,000 sub-district SKBs serving more than 66,000 villages, an average of around twenty-two villages per SKB.

EVALUATION AND RESEARCH FOR LITERACY

The Package A Kejar Programme was launched after research into the real existing situation in Indonesia regarding illiterates and primary school drop-outs. Since implementation of the programme in 1977 several research topics have been conduced related to the Kejar Programme, including advanced graduate work.

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The International Bureau of Education acknowledge with grateful thanks this contribution by Washington P. Napitupulu (Indonesia) to the cause of Literacy. Prof. Dr Napitupulu is Director-General of Non-formal Education, Youth and Sports, Ministry of Education and Culture, in the Republic of Indonesia. He has written books on education (in particular on literacy in Indonesia) and psychology, and many articles on the development of youth resources and rural education.

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